



## Nizam-ul-Mulk's Relation with the Emperor Muhammad

Shah: 1719-1748

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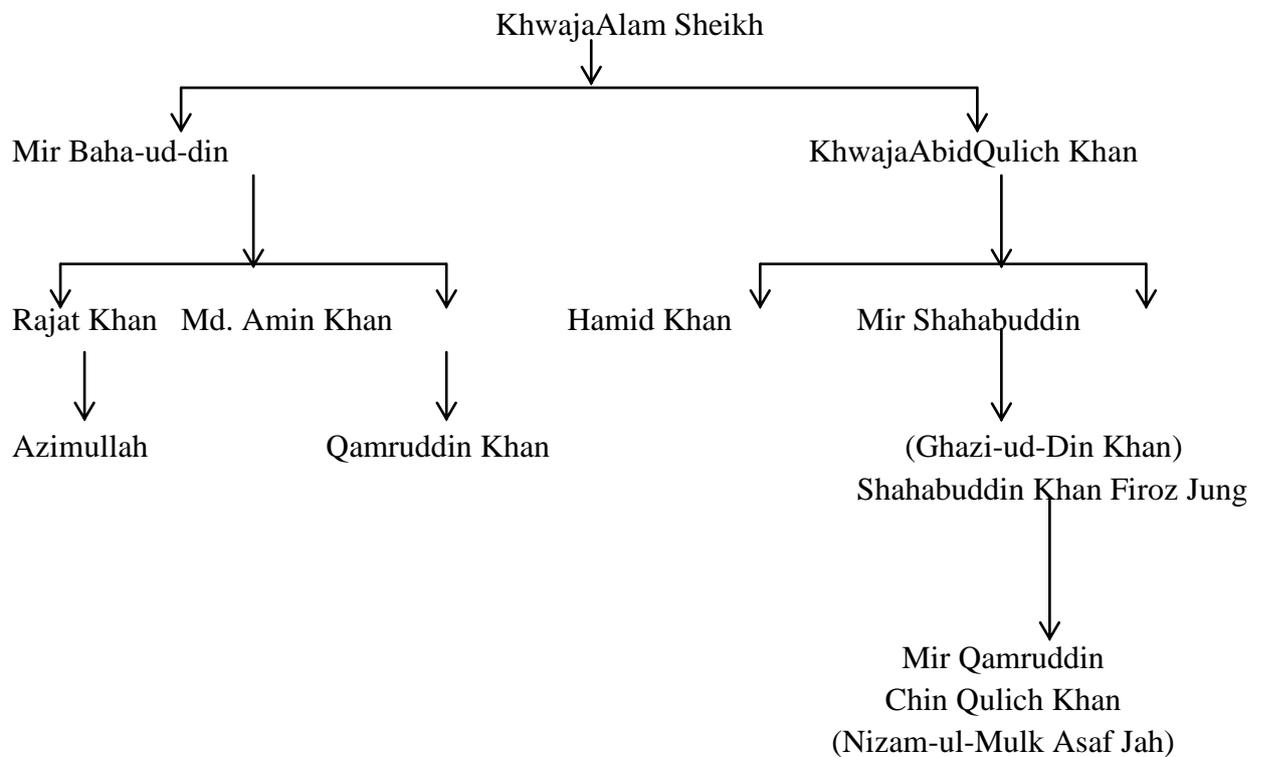
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### THE GENEALOGICAL CHART OF NIZAM-UL-MULK\*



**Abstract:** The Eighteenth Century in Indian history has always draws the attention of the Historians because of the debates associated with the period. This as believed by many historians was the time when the attempt has been made by the regional powers to set up independent kingdom for them. The debate focuses on weakening of the central authority and assigned various reasons behind the declining Mughal Empire. The successors of Aurangzeb had been alleged for having weaker personalities (as suggested by William Irvine in his book, *The Later Mughals*) than their forefathers who have powerfully

\*Munshi Abdul Qadir Bidri, *Tarikh-i-Asaf Jahi*, MSS 1649 State Library, Eng tr Zaib Hayder, Andhra Pradesh State Archives, Hyderabad. pp 1-8.

controlled the regional powers. The other reasons assigned were the religious bigotry ((Jadunath Sarkar), the economic problems such as Agrarian crisis (Irfan Habib), the administrative in efficiency in the form of Jagirdari crisis (Satish Chandra), the war of successions among the sons of the Emperors and many others. However the decline of the central authority begins immediately after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. In the present paper an attempt has been made to try to find out that Deccan under Nizam-ul-Mulk tried to take advantage of the weakening of the centre as the popular belief is or there is another side of the story where there is a positive exchange of services. Warid Tehrani in his *Tarikh-i-Waridat* mentions about the

state of affairs under Muhammad Shah, 1719-1748. He writes that the Emperor when receive any bad news from Deccan or elsewhere instead of finding solution for the problem he went to hunt or sightseeing to soothe his heart. Nizam-ul-Mulk also complains about the lack of financial support from the centre when he was fighting against the Marathas but Nizam did not use this as an excuse to carve out an independent kingdom for himself rather till his death he tried to comply with the mughal rules and regulations. He also carried forth the legacy of the mughals. This paper is an attempt to find out the instances which shows that Nizam till his last breath served the Mughal Empire with all his loyalty and tried to bring back the old prosperous days.

**KEY WORDS:** Mughals, Muhammad Shah, Deccan, Nizam-ul-Mulk

Nizam-ul-Mulk belongs to a very reputed family of Bukhara who migrated to India during the last phase of the reign of Shahjahan. Khwaja Abid, the grandfather of Nizam was born in the neighborhood of Samarqand but later moved to Bukhara. Alam Sheikh the father of Khwaja Abid was a very well known sufi of his times and received high title of *Azam-ul-Ulama*. Khwaja Abid was appointed Qazi and was conferred the title of *Shaikh-ul-Islam* from the King of Bukhara. When he came to India in the last phase of Shahjahan's reign and appeared in the court, he was given six thousand rupees and awarded mansab and was directed to go to Deccan with Prince Aurangzeb.<sup>1</sup>

The *Tarikh-i-Asafjahi* of Qader Khan Munshi Bidri whose pen name was *Munshi* provides information of the ancestry of the Nizam. Alam Shaikh, the great grandfather of Nizam, traced his descent from the sufi of Suharwardi Silsilah, Shaikh Shahabuddin Suharwardi,<sup>2</sup> who traced his origin from the first Caliph Abu Bakr the companion of Prophet.<sup>3</sup>

Shahabuddin Khan Feroz jung , the son of Khwaja Abid and father of Nizam-ul-Mulk was born at Turan and after reaching maturity he came to India where he presented himself at the court of Alamgir who appointed him in 1660. Afterwards he received consideration from the emperor and after the victory of Bijapur the emperor commanded that all the officers should write to the *faramins* that the victory of Bijapur is achieved due to Ghziuddin Khan feroz Jung, he also conquered the fort of Ibrahim garh and Firoz garh and also showed his gallantry in siege of Golkunda in spite of his wounds. After these victories he was honoured with the mansab haft hazari zat and haft hazari sawar. Later due to the widespread epidemics he became

completely blind and stopped attending the court and took rest at home. He died in 1794 and his body was brought to Delhi where he was buried beside Ajmeri Darwaza in the Khanqah constructed by him.<sup>4</sup>

Mir Qmruddin Khan was born in 1671, Aurangzeb was so kind towards him that within no time, he received the title of Chin Qilich Khan and a mansab. This mansab was increased to 5000 in the 49<sup>th</sup> *Julus* of the emperor. After the death of Aurangzeb the new emperor Bahadur Shah bestowed him with the title of Khan-i-Dauran Bahadur and also given the *faujdari* of Lucknow. But Nizam-ul-Mulk's relation was strained and he dejected from the court and stayed alone in Darul Khilafat Shahjahanabad. When Jahandar came to the throne, he called him with great honour and bestowed with the *izafa-i-mansab*. The next emperor Farrukh siyar conferred on him the title of Nizam-ul-mulk Bahadur Fath Jung with mansb of 7000/7000 *zat* and *sawar* along with the subedari of Deccan. Muhaamd Shah who came to the throne in 1719 after short reigns of Rafiuddaulah and Rafiuddarajat, Nizam once again secured the subedari of Deccan which he lost after the saiiyyad brother secured it for themselves.<sup>5\*</sup>

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month of Jumada I, year 4 of accession of emperor Muhammad Shah, on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 1722, orders were issued for making arrangements for the holding of the *Diwan-i-Am*. All the grandees and high *Mansabdars* were ordered to be present there. The Emperor thus conferred on Nizam-ul-Mulk, the office of *Wizarat*. Nizam receive usual robe, a dagger, an ornamental case (*Qalamdan-i-Wizarat*), and a diamond ring<sup>5</sup>

The author of *Munshat-i-Musavi Khan* has mentioned that Emperor Muhammad Shah once sent a *Farman* together with three *ghazals*, which were composed by the Emperor himself. Asaf Jah in his reply to that *Farman* praised every verse in the same literary style in which, they were composed by the Emperor.<sup>6</sup> He also sent Eid greetings to the Emperor and wrote congratulatory letters at anniversary of his enthronement.<sup>7</sup>

In one letter, Nizam wrote to the Emperor "God is my witness and the people are also aware that I have always try to complete my duties honestly and the royal commands with the same devotion which I use to perform my religious acts".<sup>8</sup>

According to him obedience to the king is a necessary pre-requisite condition to please God and get blessings because to be faithful to one's master is always an appreciable act.<sup>9</sup> He hoped that Emperor recognizes his endeavors and through which he get rewards in both the worlds, here and hereafter.<sup>10</sup>

Nizam-ul-Mulk never openly claimed independence of the Deccan from the central government. His loyalty to the Emperor was unshaken. Coins in the Deccan were continued to be struck in the name of the Mughal Emperor. Muhammad Shah's name was recited throughout the Deccan in the *Khutba* of the Friday's and on occasion of *Id*.<sup>11</sup> All documents issued under the authority of *Nizam-ul-Mulk* have the R.Y of Muhammad Shah, added and suffixed in the date.<sup>12</sup>

The legends in the different seals that were put on the variety of documents preserved in the Andhra Pradesh State Archives read: "*Nizam-ul-MulkFath*

*Jung Sipahsalar/murid bawolfalak Iqtedar Shah Muhammad Shah*”,<sup>13</sup> “*Nizam-ul-Mulk Fath Jung Bahadur Fidwi Muhammad Shah*”.<sup>14</sup> There is another seal of the same year reads “*Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk Fath Jung Sipahsalar/Fidwiba wo Sulaiman Iqtedar/ Shah Muhammad Shah*” another seal of the same date reads “*Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk/Fidwi/ Shah Muhammad Shah*”.<sup>15</sup>

After careful study of these legends on the seals related to the Nizam one can infer that no one except a person with high regards for an Emperor can put these on each and every important seal. If he wished he can use only his name rather posing himself as an obedient servant and disciple of the Emperor. This regard can also be seen in his actions as well. Thus, it can be said that he in theory as well as in practice a loyal and faithful servant of the Empire.

Nizam-ul-Mulk maintained loyalty to the Mughal Emperor by never disobeying the royal orders. *Lala Mansaram* records that whenever any *Farman* arrived, Nizam-ul-Mulk use to go up to the particular place called *Farman badi* and received it with full honors. The *Diwan* use to hand over the *Farman* to Nizam-ul-Mulk, who in turn after receiving it, would raise it over his head. This behavior of Nizam performed in the public shows the profound respect and regard Nizam-ul-Mulk had for the Mughal Emperor and his orders.<sup>16</sup>

Khafi Khan in his *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* remarks “Nizam-ul-Mulk had never moved a hair’s breadth in opposition to the Mughal Emperor, but in all his undertakings, he had shed a new glory on the house of Taimur”.<sup>17</sup>

During the 20<sup>th</sup> R.Y. (1737-38), Muhammad Shah invited Nizam-ul-Mulk with pressing letters to come to the court to take up the highest post. However, Nizam-ul-Mulk was unwilling to accept the invitation.<sup>18</sup>

Nizam-ul-Mulk, it seems considered the safety of law and order in the Deccan Suba more important as he has chosen the place for himself and for which he struggled with Mubariz Khan. It was against his principle to avoid the call of the emperor and after assuring the safety of the deccan, Nizam-ul-Mulk accepted the invitation and moved from Deccan to Delhi where he was received by the *Wazir* Qamruddin Khan and all his troops on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1737. On coming before the Emperor Nizam-ul-Mulk made his offerings and was honored in return with a robe from the Emperor’s own ward robe and a Jacket called a *Charqab*, worn only by members of the *chaghtai* house, descendents of Timur.<sup>19</sup> The author of the *Tarikh-i-Asafjahi* reports that on this occasion Nizam was presented with jewels, elephants decorated with gold ornaments and horses of good breeds.<sup>20</sup>

Soon after the coming of Nizam-ul-Mulk, Delhi faced the invasion of *Nadir Shah* in 1738-39; again Nizam-ul-Mulk along with Bakshi-ul-Mumalik Amir-ul-Umara Samsam-ud-daulah Khan-i- Dauran and Itmad-ud-Daulah Wazir-ul-Mumalik was appointed to go against Nadir Shah at Sirhind between Lahore and Shahjahanabad, Muhammad Shah also joined the troops. Burhan-ul-Mulk subedar of Lucknow was rrested by the troops of Nadir Shah and Amir-ul-Umara was killed after fighting bravely. After his death the disorder was created and then Muhammad Shah sent Nizam-ul Mulk for negotiations, he played a major role of mediator during Nadir

Shah's invasion and was responsible for the settlement of peace<sup>21</sup>. In view of the great services to the cause of the Empire, Muhammad Shah conferred on him the office of *Amir-ul-Umara Bakshi-ul-Mumalik*.<sup>22</sup>

It is reported by Mansaram, secretary of Nizam-ul-Mulk in his work '*Masir-i-Nizam*' that Nadir Shah before his departure asked and offered *Nizam* the responsibility of the government of the Indian Empire. But *Nizam* refused and replied "To be an Emperor, such qualities of greatness are as required, I, your humble servant, do not possess". *Nizam* mentions that his ancestors and he himself from the ancient times been in the service of the kings of Delhi, and such an act of impropriety will make him notorious of untrue to salt.<sup>23</sup>

Even in his last testament, which he made before his death, he advised his successors to keep intact the traditional relations of loyalty with the Mughal Government.<sup>24</sup>

Thus he did not give up allegiance to the *Mughal* Emperor. Had he slightest inclinations of asserting independence or disowning loyalty to the emperor, he would never pay such respect to the orders of the Emperor and emperor in turn did not allow him to enjoy such a position and privilege. Nizam-ul-Mulk was part and parcel of Mughal nobility and did not break away at any time. If these actions of Nizam-ul-Mulk are viewed in a broader perspective by considering the actions of earlier *Subedars* of Deccan and the highest position of *Wazir* and *Wakil-i-Mutlaq* that Nizam-ul-Mulk had occupied, then it would appear that these actions were nothing but part of routine administrative practice.<sup>25</sup>

Shahnawaz Khan in his work '*Masir-ul-Umara*' remarks "The Nawab was one of the imperial nobles at the court of the Emperors of Delhi from the reign of *Khuld-i-Makan* (Aurangzeb) to the death of Firdaus Aram shah (Muhammad Shah). For nearly thirty years the six subhas of Deccan were governed under him. He was a remarkable personality endowed with 'Angelic qualities' and in his government the *fakirs*, the learned and deserving people received their share according to their deserts."<sup>26</sup>

On the basis of the information provided by the contemporary accounts both regional and those written at centre that Nizam had all the respect for the emperor and complied with the rules and regulations of the empire. From the beginning of his career, he proved himself to be loyal and faithful servant irrespective of the post he held. As a *Wazir* he faced stiff resistance and found himself in a situation where he could not do the positive change that was the need of the time, the corruption crept into every branch of the administration which he failed to change after lot of efforts. Muhammad Shah also did not pay any heed to these developments who himself was under the influence of evil doers and thus it became impossible for Nizam to survive in such a hostile condition and as soon as he got the chance to move to Deccan he had wasted no time and moved towards his destination. Nizam who was trained in the traditions of Aurangzeb was not ready to accept the shortcomings that have entered into each and every field of administration because of the corrupt nobles who impressed the emperor and win favours for them. Nizam in all his capacities tried to serve loyally his master but his way was blocked by those who will suffer losses due

to Nizam's actions. In this situation Nizam try to alienate himself from those who don't like him but he never tried to over look the orders of the Emperor and present before him whenever he was called.

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